

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 8 and 12 and add new Claim 18 as follows.

1 - 7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:

a rotatable image bearing member ~~on which~~ for bearing an electrostatic image is to be formed;

a first developer carrying member, ~~which carries and conveys a developer, and develops the electrostatic image on said image bearing member by a developing bias being applied to said first developer carrying member~~ for carrying a developer and developing the electrostatic image, which is opposed to the image bearing member with a first gap;

a two first pair of regulating members, which are disposed on both sides for regulating the first gap, said first pair of regulating members being in contact with one end portion and the other end portion in a longitudinal rotation axial direction of said first developer carrying image bearing member, respectively, and which regulate a gap between said image bearing member and said first developer carrying member with said two first regulating members abutting against said image bearing member;

a second developer carrying member for carrying a developer and developing the electrostatic image, which is disposed downstream of said first developer carrying member in a rotating direction of said image bearing member and is opposed to the image bearing member with a second gap ~~, carries and conveys a developer, and develops again the electrostatic image~~

developed by said first developer carrying member by a developing bias being applied to said second developer carrying member; and

a two second pair of regulating members, which are disposed on both sides for regulating the second gap, said second pair of regulating members being in contact with one end portion and the other end portion in a longitudinal the rotation axial direction of said second developer carrying image bearing member, respectively, abut against two peripheral surface areas of said image bearing member different from the two peripheral surface areas of said image bearing member against which said two first regulating members abut, and which regulate a gap between said image bearing member and said second developer carrying member; and

pressing means for pressing said first developer carrying member and said second developer carrying member toward said image bearing member;

wherein positions, with which said first pair of regulating members are in contact, of said image bearing member do not overlap with positions, with which said second pair of regulating members are in contact, of said image bearing member the two peripheral surface areas of said image bearing member against which said two second regulating members abut are inside the two peripheral surface areas of said image bearing member against which said two first regulating members abut in a longitudinal the rotation axial direction of said image bearing member.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising a developer container, which contains a developer, and which has said first developer carrying member disposed in an opening portion opposite to said image bearing member,

wherein said second developer carrying member is disposed in said opening portion with a gap between said first developer carrying member and said second developer carrying member, and carries the developer with a layer thickness [[of]] which is restricted by the gap.

11. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein a rotation direction of said first developer carrying member is the same as a rotation direction of said second developer carrying member.

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein in a ~~the~~ first developing area, a movement direction of a surface of said first developer carrying member is the same as the movement direction of the surface of said image bearing member, and in a ~~the~~ second developing area, a movement direction of a surface of said second developer carrying member is the same as the movement direction of the surface of said image bearing member.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein in the first developing area, a peripheral speed of said first developer carrying member is higher than a peripheral speed of said image bearing member, and

wherein in the second developing area, a peripheral speed of said second developer carrying member is higher than the peripheral speed of said image bearing member.

14 - 17. (Canceled)

18. (New) The apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein a distance between said second pair of regulating members is shorter than a distance between said first pair of regulating members.